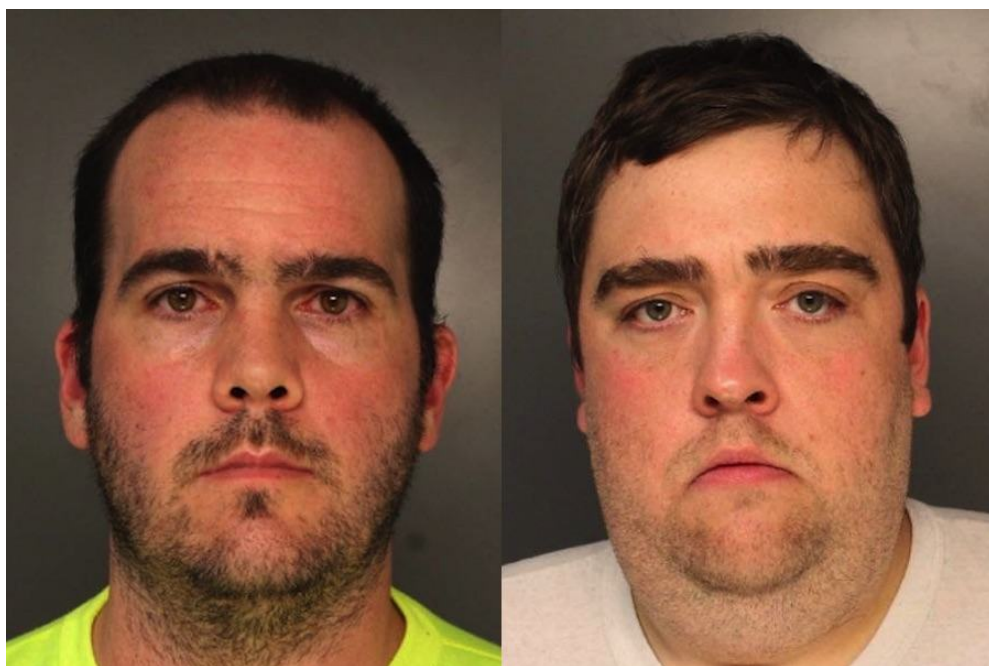


Marines Testify About the “Antifa Mob” They Say Attacked Them in Philly

“I could have died that day,” one of the Marines told the court on Thursday morning.

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Suspects Thomas Massey (left) and Tom Keenan (right) in their Philadelphia Police Department mugshots.

Nearly one month after we told you that two U.S. Marines Corps reservists said they were attacked in Old City on November 17th near the controversial “We the People” rally, the two suspects and their accusers appeared in a Philadelphia courtroom on Thursday morning.

The Marines, **Alejandro Godinez** and **Luis Torres**, both testified in uniform about the incident, while three Marine officers, including their commanding officer, stood in the gallery. The suspects, **Thomas Massey** and **Tom Keenan**, who have been linked to antifa on websites and social media, sat together with their individual lawyers and did not speak.

The Marines, who are not from the Philadelphia area, said that they had traveled to the city with other members of their helicopter unit, headquartered at Fort Dix, to attend a Marine event that night at a local hotel ballroom. They said that they had no knowledge of the nearby rally, which drew members of the alt-right as well as a large number of counter-protestors, Keenan and Massey reportedly among them.

According to the Marines' testimony, they were touring historical landmarks near Front and Chestnut streets when suspect Thomas Keenan approached them. Godinez testified that Keenan asked them "Are you proud?," to which Godinez remembers responding "We are Marines." Torres said that he remembers Keenan asking "Are you Proud Boys?," an allusion to one of the alt-right groups behind the rally, and one that Torres said he didn't understand. "I didn't know what Proud Boys meant," he said.



The suspects hide their faces from the cameras in the courthouse on Thursday.

Whatever Keenan said, both Marines testified that Keenan, Massey, and approximately ten other people — men and women, some masked and some unmasked — then began attacking them with mace, punches, and kicks, and calling them "nazis" and "white supremacists."

On the stand, Godinez said that he was "bewildered" by being called a white supremacist and immediately cried out, "I'm Mexican!" After that, as the attack continued, both men said that members of the group, including Keenan, repeatedly used ethnic slurs, including "spic" and "wetback," against the Marines. (There was no testimony that Massey used any such language).

Godinez testified that he was maced at least six times, hit in the head, and kicked in the ribs, and he said that while he was being “stomped,” members of the group, which the judge and the district attorney’s office have both referred to as a “mob,” chanted “fuck him up” over and over again.



Thomas Keenan and his attorney outside the courthouse.

“The best way I can describe it is the sound of people chanting in a soccer stadium,” Godinez told the court, also adding that Keenan was “laughing, smiling, and having a good time, while I could have died that day.”

Torres testified that Massey punched him “full force” repeatedly while he held his hands up above his face to protect himself, and the prosecutor used the opportunity to make it clear that while both Torres and Godinez are Marines, the suspects are significantly larger in both height and weight than the two of them.

In a statement previously released to Philly Mag, Godinez identified the group as an “antifa mob” and said “we were outnumbered ... there were two Marines against 10 to 12 assailants.”

On the stand, Godinez explained that he tried to call 911 once the group had fled but that he couldn’t operate his phone because of the mace. Torres called 911, and an ambulance transported both men to Jefferson Hospital, where Godinez was treated. He said that his sight is still affected by what happened that day — he was noticeably blinking throughout the court proceeding — and that he continues to have discomfort from some of his other injuries. He testified that he might require surgery. Torres did not seek medical treatment.

At one point in the hearing, Keenan's attorney referred to the incident as a "tussle." Shortly thereafter, the judge told the lawyer, "This isn't like kids at a playground."

After Godinez and Torres testified and the defense lawyers made brief arguments, the judge ruled that both men would be held for trial on aggravated assault and conspiracy charges — both felonies — as well as several misdemeanors. The judge also added a felony charge of ethnic intimidation against Keenan. Their next court date is December 27th.

The lawyers for the suspects declined to comment for this story.

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